

Kristof did a pair of columns on the subject of maternal mortality.

In the first column, he described how a young woman in Cameroon named Prudence Lemokouno was desperately ill. Her baby was already dead and she was dying, her uterus ruptured. After 3 days of labor, her family had managed to get her to a hospital, but the doctor initially refused to operate, saying he needed both money and blood. The family did not have the money, and the nearest blood bank was 50 miles away. Kristof and his associate provided the money and donated the blood. They hoped it would be enough, but the doctor still did not operate immediately. Later, Mr. Kristof wrote a second column. In it, he told us that the young woman had died. In describing her struggle, he wrote, "It was obvious that what was killing her wasn't so much complications in pregnancy as the casual disregard for women like her across much of the developing world. . . . It's not biology that kills them so much as neglect."

We cannot continue to overlook these women. No one should be disposable. And today's devastating statistics do not have to be tomorrow's realities. We cannot make childbirth risk free; it is not. There are sometimes factors and conditions that doctors cannot in the finest hospitals in the world cannot prevent.

But women and girls in developing countries die at such tragically high rates during pregnancy and childbirth primarily for some basic and preventable reasons. And many of the solutions are both simple and cost effective.

Millions of deliveries in the world take place without a skilled birth attendant—that means no doctor, no nurse, no midwife, no one with any medical training at all. In fact, millions of women literally give birth alone.

The shortage of health workers handicaps the world's fight against HIV/AIDS and every other global health challenge. That is equally true of the struggle against maternal mortality. Training community health workers, nurses, midwives, and doctors is part of the battle. But it is also critical to help countries better distribute their health workforces and better manage their health systems.

Malawi, for example, has one of the highest maternal mortality rates in the world. But 25 percent of its nurses and 50 percent of its physicians are concentrated in 4 central hospitals. And yet the population of Malawi is estimated to be 87 percent rural.

We address the maternal mortality crisis in part by building health workforces to provide prenatal care and to be there during delivery, in rural areas as well as cities.

We also help countries address this crisis by getting them to take a second look at child marriage. In developing countries, girls aged 10 to 14 who become pregnant are 5 times more likely

to die in pregnancy or childbirth than women aged 20 to 24. These same young mothers are also at higher risk of obstetric fistula. Fistula is a devastating condition that can result from prolonged labor without medical help. In the end, as a result, babies are most often stillborn and women and girls are left with gaping holes in their bodies that leak feces and urine. They are then often abandoned by their families.

Even if their mothers escaped this brutal, prolonged labor and its terrible consequences, infant mortality rates for the babies of these child mothers are also much higher than for the children of older women. Yet an estimated 25,000 girls are married each day in the world, some of them as young as 7 or 8 years old.

We save lives not by demanding that countries ban child marriage in fact, child marriage is officially illegal in most nations. We save lives by convincing communities to keep their daughters in school rather than marrying them off. Many parents believe that marrying their daughters early is the best way to keep them safe from sexual predators and other dangers. We can help their communities find better ways to keep their daughters safe.

Senator HAGEL and I have introduced a bill, the International Child Marriage Prevention and Assistance Act, to help countries take such steps. We plan to reintroduce this bill when Congress reconvenes for the new session in January and work toward its enactment.

Women and girls also die during pregnancy and childbirth because they are cut off from access to health care. There is a direct link between lack of transportation and high maternal mortality rates. That is one of the many links between poverty and maternal mortality. Being poor should not be a death sentence.

Rural development is critical to solving this problem, and reducing maternal mortality will enhance economic development. We can and should train more health workers, encourage communities to end child marriage, and build better transportation networks.

But those aren't the only factors that affect maternal mortality and our response to it. Politics is another cause of death. Of all the factors that contribute to the deaths of mothers, and often their babies, this is the easiest one to fix and the most unforgivable to allow to persist.

The United Nations Population Fund, UNFPA, is an organization that is doing lifesaving work. They help to promote reproductive health, including, for example, providing safe delivery kits. What is a safe delivery kit? It is often just a plastic sheet, a bar of soap, a razor to cut the umbilical cord, and a string to tie it. Imagine being on the verge of giving birth or knowing that your wife is about to deliver and lacking even these most basic supplies.

UNFPA provides family planning assistance in countries where they are

welcomed. In those countries, they provide this help to families who ask for it. They also have a well developed program to prevent and treat obstetric fistula, that terrible condition which I described earlier that results from prolonged labor without medical assistance.

So each year, Congress appropriates money to support UNFPA's efforts to help countries and families who want their assistance. Yet every year the Bush administration has withheld that money. The administration does so because it claims that since UNFPA works in China, that UNFPA is supporting or participating in coercive abortions or involuntary sterilization, practices which the Chinese Government has long carried out.

In fact, UNFPA works to do exactly the opposite. UNFPA promotes voluntary family planning and opposes abortion as a form of family planning.

The United States sent a fact finding mission to China in 2002 to investigate this matter. It found no evidence of wrongdoing by UNFPA and recommended that the funds Congress appropriated for UNFPA be released. Studies have shown that abortions decrease in areas where UNFPA operates—and so do maternal and child mortality.

False accusations that UNFPA supports abortions in China are cutting off funding that could help save the lives. Yet, on September 13, for the fifth year in a row, the Bush administration announced that it was withholding the \$34 million appropriated by Congress for UNFPA.

Every minute, a woman in the developing world dies from treatable complications of pregnancy or childbirth. That is a terrible tragedy. But the fact that politics are making this tragedy worse is an abomination.

HONORING OUR ARMED FORCES

Mr. NELSON of Nebraska. Mr. President, I rise today to honor SSG Jeremy W. Mulhair of Omaha, NE.

Sergeant Mulhair will be remembered as a brave and committed soldier, a dedicated husband, and a loving father. His family says it was Sergeant Mulhair's dream to serve his country as a soldier, inspired by his father's, Jerry Mulhair, service in Vietnam, his uncle's service in the Navy, and a cousin's in the Marines.

Sergeant Mulhair was originally born in Michigan but grew up on a farm in a rural area northwest of Omaha. He attended Horace Mann Junior High School and Omaha Central High School. He later earned an equivalency degree before enlisting in the Nebraska Army National Guard. Sergeant Mulhair served with the Army in Korea in addition to two tours in Iraq.

On November 30, 2006, while serving in support of Operation Iraqi Freedom with A Troop, 1st Squadron, 7th Cavalry Regiment, 1st Cavalry Division, of Fort Hood, TX, Sergeant Jeremy

Mulhair passed away when a roadside bomb exploded near his vehicle in Taji, Iraq. He was 35 years old and had been serving in Iraq since October.

Giving his life in service to our country, Sergeant Jeremy Mulhair is the paradigm of courage and selflessness. He is survived by his wife Suzie and three children, Celina, Jeremy, and Maybel, of Fort Hood, TX; his parents, Jerry and Mildred, of Kimballton, IA; his brother, Robert Mulhair, of Mead; and his sisters, Tammy Lines and Dixie Heisner, both of Omaha.

I offer my prayers and thoughts to Sergeant Mulhair's family. He made the ultimate sacrifice to ensure that his children and others realize a peaceful and free world. Sergeant Mulhair was a soldier of incredible purpose and all Americans will never forget what he gave to our country.

LANCE CORPORAL MICHAEL SCHOLL

Mr. President, I rise today to honor LCpl Michael Scholl of Lincoln, NE.

Corporal Scholl will be remembered as a brave marine, a good friend, and a loving father and husband. He graduated from Lincoln High School in 2002, where teachers and classmates knew him for his easygoing personality and intelligence. He was also interested in cars, participating in a local car club, Camaros, Inc.

Friends say Corporal Scholl had dreamed of serving as a marine since he was young. When he enlisted it was only after being denied at first because he was diagnosed with a kidney condition as a toddler. His ability to overcome this obstacle set the precedent for his reputation as a reliable, courageous marine. Corporal Scholl's company commander told Scholl's family that the corporal had saved his life during a battle in October.

Corporal Scholl met his wife Melissa on a beach in Hawaii while training there. The couple married before his overseas assignment in Afghanistan. A few weeks after his deployment to Iraq, Melissa gave birth to their daughter, Addison. Sadly, Scholl was never able to see his infant daughter.

On November 14, 2006, while serving with the Marine Corps' 2nd Battalion, 3rd Marine Regiment, 3rd Marine Division, III Marine Expeditionary Force based out of Kaneohe Bay, HI, Corporal Scholl passed away from wounds received from a roadside bomb in Haditha, Iraq. He was 21 years old.

In addition to his wife and daughter, Cpl Mike Scholl is survived by his mother and stepfather, Debora and Jackson Chandler of Lincoln, and his father and stepmother, Steve and Donna Scholl of Friend.

Sacrificing his own life so that others could live, Corporal Scholl was the embodiment of bravery and the finest example of selflessness. I extend my deepest condolences to Corporal Scholl's family and friends. His unflinching patriotism and his dedication to his family will remain a source of hope and inspiration for all Americans. Corporal Scholl was a man of exceptional honor,

and we will not forget what he gave for our Nation.

SERGEANT FIRST CLASS SCOTT E. NISELY

Mr. President, I rise today to honor SFC Scott E. Nisely, 48, of Marshalltown, IA.

Sergeant First Class Nisely will be remembered as a man of faith, a compassionate father and friend, and a dedicated soldier. Originally from Syracuse, NE, Sergeant First Class Nisely graduated from Doane College in Crete, NE, where he was a decorated track star, excelling in hurdles. His alma mater is renaming an annual track and field event as the Scott Nisely Memorial Track Classic. While in college, SFC Nisely enlisted with the Marines Corps Reserve, later rising to the rank of major, and serving in Operation Desert Storm.

After leaving the Active-Duty Marines, he worked for the U.S. Postal Service in Marshalltown, IA. In 2002, he enlisted in the Iowa Army National Guard. On September 30, 2006, while serving in support of Operation Iraqi Freedom in Al Asad, Iraq, with C Company, 1st Battalion, 133rd Infantry Regiment, 34th Infantry Division, Iowa Falls, then-Staff Sergeant Nisely passed away when his military vehicle encountered small arms fire. He was posthumously promoted to sergeant first class.

Sergeant First Class Nisely is survived by his wife Geri of Marshalltown, IA, his son Justin of Greeley, CO, his daughter Sarah of Ames, IA, and his parents J.C. and Norma of Syracuse, NE.

I offer my sincere condolences to Sergeant First Class Nisely's family. He made the ultimate and most courageous sacrifice in the name of freedom and hope to defend liberty. Sergeant First Class Nisely was a man of incredible bravery; he will be forever remembered as a hero who sacrificed everything for his fellow country men and women.

RETIREMENT OF GENERAL JAMES L. JONES, U.S. MARINE CORPS

Mr. LEAHY. Mr. President, I would like to take this opportunity to commend GEN James L. Jones and to congratulate him on his retirement. General Jones has served this country through landmark events, including the Cold War and September 11, with consistent skill and with dedication, energy and intelligence. The country has greatly benefited from his service, and his clear-eyed counsel will be greatly missed.

I have known Jim Jones for almost 30 years. I was immediately impressed with his calm manner and obvious intellect when I first encountered him as a major in the Senate's Marine Corps liaison office. I had heard of his distinguished background to that point, which included service in Vietnam, where he earned a Silver Star, and

years as a company commander, motivating his marines with his steadfastness.

Over the years, I, along with all of my colleagues in the Senate, have watched Jim Jones grow into a stellar leader. There are two sides to military service—the field operations and the administrative side. While each presents its own challenges, both are absolutely essential to a strong Marine Corps. Jim Jones has been simply superb in both roles.

I remember encountering then Colonel Jones in northern Iraq after the first gulf war during Operation Provide Comfort, which sought to provide food and supplies to the Kurds. At one point, I accompanied him into the town of Zaku. While you would think that this would be one of the more dangerous places, with multitudes of refugees and harassing Iraqi forces, I must admit I have never felt safer as Marine helicopter gunships, Air Force A-10s, and well-orchestrated groups of marines provided cover. General Jones was utterly comfortable, and completely confident, in that environment.

Yet he was just as at home in the conference rooms at Corps Headquarters, at the Pentagon, and walking the historic Halls of Congress. Serving as the 32nd Commandant of the U.S. Marine Corps, General Jones provided remarkable leadership to the Corps before and after the September 11 attacks. The marines under his command took on critical counterterrorist activities, forging strong ties with our special operations forces. General Jones' leadership led to the Marine Corps' successful operations in southern Afghanistan. Always a persuasive advocate for adequate resources for the Corps, he was an equally outstanding contributor to the Joint Chiefs of Staff, where he could only "partly" wear his service hat.

For someone with such multifaceted talent, skill and experience, it is little surprise that General Jones performed in equally spectacular fashion in his last, two-pronged position as Commander of U.S. European Command and as the Supreme Allied Commander, Europe. The 14th Supreme Allied Commander, he has encouraged our NATO allies to take on greater military responsibilities outside of Europe, including more leadership in ongoing operations in Afghanistan. His clear, well-spoken manner and obvious credibility have made General Jones an invaluable asset.

Through it all, General Jones has had no greater partner, confidant, and friend than his wife Diane. The commitment that they have shown in the good and bad times, to their children and to all who know them, is simply remarkable, and it is inspiring.

I join with my wife Marcelle, my fellow Vermonters, and all Americans in expressing our deep thanks to General Jones and his family. We owe this outstanding American, great marine, and dedicated representative of the very